



CITY COUNCIL

Nominations & Appointments Committee

Monday, June 3, 2013
Meeting Report

Attendance: S. Marmarou, R. Corcoran

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 pm by Mr. Marmarou.

I. Interviews

Odelia White (appointment – Housing Authority)

Mr. Marmarou questioned how long Ms. White was a resident of Reading. Ms. White stated that she has lived in Reading many years and has lived in public housing for many years.

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Ms. White was interested in serving as a member of the Housing Authority. Ms. White stated that she loves to serve people. She stated that she is involved in her church and her community. She stated that she often learns from others. She explained that she helped to establish the City-wide Resident Council and spends many hours volunteering. She stated that she worked with HUD to secure funding for office equipment for the Resident Council. She stated that she spends much time speaking with other residents to learn their concerns.

Mr. Marmarou questioned how Ms. White handles new residents who do not want to live in a high rise setting. Ms. White stated that she explains that the resident must keep their treasures with them. She encourages all residents to seek out the positives of high rise living and encourages them to make friends and get involved.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Ms. White would be willing to appear before Council as an example of the outstanding residents of Reading who are involved in boards, authorities and commissions. Ms. White stated that she would be willing to appear before Council.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the appointment of Odelia White to the Housing Authority.

David Beane (reappointment – Environmental Advisory Council)

Mr. Corcoran questioned how long Mr. Beane was a member of the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC). Mr. Beane stated that he has served one full term – three years.

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Beane was interested in continuing to serve. Mr. Beane stated that his work is not done. He stated that when he joined the EAC there seemed to be a lack of focus. He stated that he has promoted the use of subcommittees to further the work of the EAC. He explained that members of the subcommittee do not need to be members of the EAC but that a member chairs the subcommittee. Mr. Beane stated that this has increased the focus and work of the EAC.

Mr. Beane stated that the EAC has prioritized a few projects and is currently working on regulations regarding alternative energy. He stated that when that is complete he would like to begin reviewing all the City's construction codes to allow for sustainable construction. He stated that the EAC currently has a good core and there is a good team effort.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he was glad to hear that Mr. Beane would like to continue this work.

Mr. Corcoran complimented the work of the EAC. He stated that they are a very productive committee. Mr. Beane thanked Mr. Corcoran and stated that it was good to hear Council's approval of the work of the EAC. He stated that he has also had support from Council in the past during the EAC's annual reports. He requested that Council make suggestions on future issues and supply feedback.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the reappointment of David Beane to the Environmental Advisory Council.

Ms. Reed and Mr. Murin arrived at this time.

Sam Ruchlewicz (appointment – Charter Review Commission)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Ruchlewicz was interested in serving in this position. Mr. Ruchlewicz stated that he is a resident of the City. He stated that as a young adult he is interested in the future of Reading. He stated that he hopes to assist businesses.

Mr. Marmarou questioned the meeting schedule of the Charter Review Commission. Mr. Corcoran stated that the meetings have begun and that the next meeting is scheduled for June 5.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Mr. Ruchlewicz would be able to attend. Mr. Ruchlewicz stated that he would be able to attend.

Ms. Reed stated that she reviewed Mr. Ruchlewicz's application and had no questions.

After Mr. Ruchlewicz and Mr. Murin left the meeting, Mr. Corcoran explained that he did not ask any questions due to legal issues.

Mr. Marmarou recommends the appointment of Sam Ruchlewicz to the Charter Review Commission.

John Kramer (appointment – Main Street Board)

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Mr. Kramer was interested in serving on this Board. Mr. Kramer stated that he has always been interested in economic development. He stated that he has been serving on the Police Diversity Board but that it was time to move on. He stated that the commercial core is the heart of the downtown and needs to grow and be redeveloped. He stated that he was impressed that the City has sent their application for main street designation to Harrisburg and noted his hope that the effort would be more coordinated.

Mr. Marmarou stated that Mr. Kramer should know many of the people involved.

Ms. Reed explained that she is no longer involved with the Main Street or downtown effort as she is no longer invited to meetings. She stated that this leaves no Council liaison for the work downtown. Mr. Kramer stated that he attended a meeting and only Mr. Agudo and Ms. Edwards were in attendance from the City.

Ms. Reed stated that Council involvement is critical. She stated that she attended as her district does not include any part of the downtown. She stated that she is no longer welcome due to the current political dynamics. Mr. Kramer expressed his belief that there should be a Council liaison.

Mr. Marmarou questioned why Ms. Reed did not tell Council about this issue sooner. Ms. Reed stated that the last DID meeting she attended was in the fall of 2012. She stated that telling Council will not change the situation. She stated that she is glad that the designation and work on the downtown is progressing.

Mr. Kramer stated that the designation was submitted in February. He stated that five committees have been formed and the committees are setting their goals.

Ms. Reed stated that this Board is a perfect fit for Mr. Kramer.

Mr. Kramer noted his understanding that it will be a challenge to redevelop Reading's downtown. He stated that it will not be what it once was but stated that it can become a center for government and banking. He noted the need for retail to support the employees of these businesses. He stated that downtown Reading must serve those outside Reading. He noted the need for tourist attractions with the coming of the downtown hotel. There needs to be things for visitors to do and places for them to go.

Ms. Reed expressed her belief that placing entertainment square off Penn St was the wrong location. Mr. Kramer noted the need to work on synergies for this area.

Ms. Reed noted the need for Mr. Kramer to be vocal and stated that she is glad that Mr. Kramer will be serving the City in this capacity.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee recommends the appointment of John Kramer to the Main Street Board.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee adjourned at 4:55 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Shelly Katzenmoyer,
Deputy City Clerk